

AUTOMOTIVE

McLaren, Richard Mille emphasize speed, performance in new launch

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The RM 40-01 Automatic Tourbillon McLaren Speedtail is limited to 106 pieces. Image courtesy of McLaren

By SARAH RAMIREZ

British automaker McLaren and Swiss watchmaker Richard Mille have unveiled their latest collaboration.

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Inspired by McLaren's Speedtail hypercar, the RM 40-01 Automatic Tourbillon McLaren Speedtail is being touted as the watchmaker's "most extreme" timepiece. It is the newest collaboration between the two brands, which have been partnering together since 2016.

Speed Tale

Both the Speedtail hypercar and timepiece are ultra-exclusive, with both the vehicle and watch limited to 106 pieces. McLaren's Speedtail production models cost \$2.3 million, more than double the \$1 million price tag for the inspired-Richard Mille timepiece.

A tourbillon is an addition to a watch's mechanics meant to increase its accuracy. This requires a great level of detail, precision and skill, contributing to these watches' high price tags.

A new film showcases both the watch and hypercar

Led by Richard Mille's technical director of movement Salvador Arbona, the movements of the RM 40-01 required 8,600 hours of development. The watch's uniquely asymmetrical case the Speedtail hypercar, the source of inspiration, takes its silhouette from water droplets took 2,800 over 18 months to perfect under the leadership of technical director Julien Boillat.

To promote the collaboration and the two engineering marvels, the watchmaker tapped Guillaume Mille to helm a film.

"Speed Tale," a tribute to the music video for Jamiroquai's pop song "Cosmic Girl," captures the experience of driving a McLaren. Telescopic zooms and other accelerations compliment the soundtrack and add to the short's retro aesthetic.

A Speedtail and P1 are both featured in the film, which follows the two cars driving through mountainous roads in

Spain from daybreak to dusk. While the Speedtail does not reach its top speed of 250 mph in "Speed Tale," the vignette still highlights the hypercar's precision in handling sharp turns.



The RM40-01 Automatic Tourbillon McLaren Speedtail. Image credit: Richard Mille

Richard Mille has partnered with the automaker's Formula 1 team since 2016, when the two brands signed a 10-year agreement. Their exclusivity, rarity and keen sense of design make the high-priced brands a match, along with a passion for meticulous craftsmanship and appreciation of technology ([see story](#)).

McLaren collaborations

McLaren has been growing its partnership portfolio in a bid to improve its brand presence and expand in lifestyle categories outside of its elite cars.

The automaker has partnered with several apparel brands for clothing collaborations, including Castore and Belstaff.

Most recently, McLaren and U.S. streetwear brand Period Correct produced their second joint capsule collection. The designs for the new limited-edition collection drew inspiration from McLaren's 720S and its newly-launched 765L ([see story](#)).

McLaren has also been working with Tumi as its official luggage partner for its racing team and consumer cars brand, leveraging a shared focus on technical innovation and design. Their partnership was announced in late 2019 ([see story](#)).